

## **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION EXPERTS**

**Zainab Shahgaldi, \*Mahvash Noorbakhsh and Parivash Nourbakhsh**

*College of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Islamic Azad University- Karaj Branch, Alborz, Iran*

*\*Author for Correspondence*

### **ABSTRACT**

Based on organizational assumptions, in order to be able to attain higher efficiency and meet the organization objectives, it is to recognize communicative features of individuals working for organization. The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between communication skills with the effectiveness of physical education experts. The study is a descriptive and a survey research. The population considered for the current research study involves all 100 experts within the physical education and health department of the general Office of Education. All of these 100 people have been considered as the sample of this study. The tools for data collection include the questionnaire of communicative skills by Barton (1991) and the questionnaire of organizational efficiency by Hsu (2002) having the validity scores of 0.82 and 0.93, respectively. In order to analyze the collected data, descriptive and inferential statistical methods such as Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression Analysis have been applied. The results show that 56.7 percent of the participants are female and the remaining 43.3 percent are male. In addition, the findings reveal that among communication skills, audio/verbal sub-scale is the best predictor for the efficiency of male and female specialists. Furthermore, verbal communications has the highest simple correlation coefficient with organizational efficiency.

**Keywords:** *Communication Skills, Organizational Efficiency, Physical Education Experts*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the value system of our society, sport is considered as a valuable sociocultural phenomenon and one of the major aspects of the society. Sport organizations as the executive custodians of the relationship between administrators and employees are considered among the important and influential areas of organizational interaction on production and human services within an organization. In this regard, the transfer of knowledge as the major objective of the organization requires a good and appropriate communication atmosphere among different administrative layers. As a social being and in order to provide for different individual and social requirements and the attainment of organizational objectives, human beings need to establish relationship and interaction with other members within organizations and affect the. Interaction is a dynamic process that starts in itself and covers a considerable area in the world around us.

Various models have been proposed related to the process of interaction that are in line with the development of models related to influential interaction and methods and techniques used to increase the influence on others and the attainment of personal and organizational objectives in order to increase the efficiency of an organization. Managers can facilitate the attainment of organizational objectives and a more effective management by taking into account effective communication networks and the improvement of human skills such as development and communication skills. Communication refers to the transfer of information from a sender to a receiver in such a way that it is understandable and clear for both parties. In case one of these elements (sender, receiver, the message) is missing, no communication would be done (Sullivan, 2004).

One of the basic assumptions in organizational behavior is the recognition of individual and interactional characteristics of people in order to attain influence, efficiency, effectiveness, and finally higher productivity and the attainment of organizational objectives (Rezaeian, 2006). This subject has a close relationship with various individual, social, economic, and cultural aspects (Guo and Sanchez, 2009).

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Effective managers build communication and link the past and present time to an inspiring picture of future through their sayings and doings. The skill to start communication is essential when the environment changes rapidly. The effectiveness of a manager often depends on his/her ability to link past experiences to the future. Since individuals do not show good reactions towards change, managers should establish a close relationship with their group both verbally and in action in order to create effective communications (Mathis, 2007).

Guo and Sanchez (2009) have studied the major elements in the process of communication and have investigated various communication skills within different approaches in order to improve communications. They point out that a skillful manager should focus on the ways that improve communications among the employees and minimize conflicts in the workplace. While we make use of different types of communications in our daily life, they are not what was meant by communication ability that we need. Of course, it should be pointed out that conversing well and getting one's message across is ability. Since the skills of effective communications was related to the duty of managers in guidance, planning, and organization, a skillful manager should focus on ways that improve his/her communication in order to have reception among the employees for being praised, minimize conflicts, have influence over opinions and behaviors, and finally control mutual reactions in the workplace.

Ineffective communications happen when the process of communication faces problems by some barriers. In order to attain productivity, managers should involve employees in the process of decision-making. All these tasks and activities require managers who provoke teamwork and at the same time take into account various external elements like economic, social, cultural, legal and technological elements that are influential in the process of decision-making (Roszak, 2005).

In organizational communications, managers and employees interact with others in two levels. A part of the communications takes place in horizontal level in which, people communicate with employees and managers of the same rank. Another level (that seems to involve the bigger share of communications) is vertical communication where managers and employees have to interact with those of lower or higher ranks. It seems that those managers who benefit from better verbal, auditory, and feedback skills would be able to establish effective communications. Among the less-investigated problems within sport organizations is taking communication skills into account (Nazari *et al.*, 2012). During the past few decades, the subject of efficiency has attracted the attention of researchers in the field of management and design in organizations and various models, approaches, and criteria have been put forward in this regard. Yukl (2008) argues that the actual efficiency within an organization equals the rate of attainment to organizational objectives. Efficiency is considered as the ability to make use of the surrounding environment in order to obtain valuable resources for the continuous performance. It is defined as the degree and amount of the provision for the needs or meeting those evaluative criteria for people outside the organization (Yukl, 2008). Chelladuray and Haggerty (1991) and Mathis (2007) point that the lack of communication skills leads to increase in costs and as a result reduces efficiency. Effective managers build bridges through communications and connect past and present time to an inspiring view of future by their statements and performances. According to Papa Dimitriou, and Taylor (2010), the elite within organizations show the lowest rate of satisfaction with the efficiency level of programs. As Yukl (2008) argues, often the leadership behavior, management programs, structural forms, external innovations, and the manner of applying them are effective on organizational performance. Among the issues that were mentioned, management programs and systems are more effective.

What all organizations have in common is to attempt to increase efficiency. In this regard, the majority of research studies done in the field of organization and management have dealt with it consciously or unconsciously. Various definitions and models have been proposed for efficiency that each has its own requirements and limitations (Robbins, 2005).

Kuzehchian *et al.*, (2010) investigated on entrepreneurial structure and organizational efficiency within the Sport Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran. They found that the revision of structural models within this organization is essential for its managers in order to establish a creative, innovative, and

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entrepreneurial atmosphere. In addition, they pointed to the creation of a structure based on open flow of information, delegation of responsibilities and easy access to information, permissive control, and group work (in which the creativity and innovation are emphasized) as ways that enhance the creation of such an organization .

Nazari *et al.*, (2011) investigated the differences in communication skills among men and women in Iranian sport organizations and found that there are significant differences with regard to verbal and auditory components. However, they found no significant differences between males and females with respect to feedback skills. In verbal, auditory, and feedback skills, there was a significant difference based on the level of education.

The level of knowledge, understanding, and social status that individuals acquire within a society together with the acquisition of cultural characteristics and standing as the reference in society, leads to the definition of communication levels between people. Therefore, the level of education can be considered as one of the factors that affect the acquisition of communication skills between both genders. MatinZarei and Yousefzadeh (2010) attempted to clarify the communication skills of managers and its effects on employees' job satisfaction and found that there is a significant difference between the current situation and the ideal one.

This means that managers have a long distance towards the ideal situation in their communication skills. The above results points to the cause of many problems related to the lack of appropriate communications between managers and employees within organizations. In addition, the results show that there is a significant and direct relationship between the index of managers' communication skills and employees' job satisfaction. In the majority of resources related to organizational behavior, job satisfaction is considered as one of the outputs in organizational management process. Based on the above findings, improvement on the communication skills of managers should be taken into account in order to attain an appropriate level of job satisfaction.

In the organizations and offices of Education Ministry of Iran, specialists and officials in the field of physical education can attempt to increase communication skills, plan accurately and efficiently, and operationalize those programs accurately in order to increase organizational efficiency, effectiveness, and finally productivity.

Because of the importance that the subject of communication skills and efficiency has in the field of education and on the specialists of physical education and because of the shortage of research studies in this respect, the researcher has attempted to find answer to the following question:

“Is there a relationship between communication skills and organizational efficiency among the specialists within Iranian sport organizations?”

Therefore, the current study attempts to investigate the relationship between communication skills and the efficiency of specialists in the field of physical education and health employed at the Office of Education, Tehran.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The current research project is a survey and descriptive methods have been applied. Population for this study includes all the experts employed at the physical education and health department of the General Office of Education in the city of Tehran (N=100), all of whom have been selected as the sample under investigation. For the collection of data, the questionnaire of communication skills (Barton, 1991) and the questionnaire of organizational efficiency (Hsu, 2002). The reliability for the above questionnaires have been determined as 0.82 and 0.93, respectively.

In addition, university professors and experts within the field have confirmed face validity of the questionnaires. Analysis of the collected data was performed at descriptive and inferential levels. In order to test research hypotheses, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was applied and Multiple Regression Analysis was performed to predict communication skills and efficiency. In order to analyze the data, SPSS software has been used with a level of confidence at 95 percent.

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**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Results**

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics of participants’ age and management experience for males and females**

Feature		Mean	Standard deviation	Index	
				Min.	Max.
Age	Male	37.3	11.6	23	55
	Female	39.7	11.1	30	60
Experience	Male	6.3	4.1	2	16
	Female	8	5.8	1	20

**Table 2: Statistics for communication skill and organizational effectiveness and their sub-scales**

Variable		Statistical indices			
		Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
Communication skills	Female	57.8	8.8	39	81
	Male	59.7	7.9	45	80
Verbal communications	Female	19.6	3.4	11	27
	Male	20.8	3.3	15	30
Auditory communications	Female	17.9	3.6	12	28
	Male	18.3	3.2	12	25
Feedback communications	Female	20.1	3.5	12	27
	Male	20.5	3.3	13	28
Organizational efficiency	Female	62.4	12.8	21	83
	Male	59.5	15.5	29	85
Organization	Female	16.7	3.6	7	23
	Male	15.4	3.9	6	21
Decision making	Female	17.4	3.7	5	25
	Male	16.7	3.9	8	24
Personal communications	Female	9.9	3.1	3	15
	Male	9.4	2.5	3	15
Job satisfaction	Female	18.4	4.5	6	27
	Male	18.1	4.5	7	28

Testing the research hypotheses

**Table 3: Relationship between communication skills and their sub-scales with efficiency in female participants**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Efficiency	1				
2. Communication skills	0.25*	1			
3. Verbal communications	0.28*	0.89**	1		
4. Auditory communications	-0.25*	0.79**	0.55**	1	
5. Feedback communications	0.11	0.85**	0.72**	0.42**	1

\* Correlation is significant at 0.05

\*\*Correlation is significant at 0.01

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According to the information provided in table 3, correlation between the sub-scales of communication skills and efficiency is 0.25 that is significant at the level of 0.05. Therefore, the higher the communication skills, the higher will be the rate of efficiency. The correlation of the subscales of verbal and auditory communication with efficiency was determined as 0.28 and -0.25, respectively.

**Table 4: Relationship between communication skills and its sub-scales with efficiency in male participants**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Organizational efficiency	1				
2. Communication skills	0.06	1			
3. Verbal communication	0.08	0.85**	1		
4. Auditory communication	0.03	0.73**	0.43**	1	
5. Feedback communication	0.01	0.81**	0.59**	0.34*	1

\*Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

\*\*Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01

According to the information provided in table 4, correlation of the sub-scales of communication skills with efficiency is 0.06 that is significant at the level of 0.05. Therefore, as communication skills increase, efficiency would increase. The correlation of verbal and auditory communication with efficiency were determined as 0.08 and 0.03, respectively.

**Table 5: Results of multiple regression analysis for female participants (step- wise)**

Dependent variable	Independent variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	B	
					Verbal communications	Auditory communications
Organizational efficiency	Verbal communications	0.28	0.08	4.5	$\beta = 0.28$ t= 2.1	
	Auditory communications	0.4	0.16	5.1	$\beta = 0.47$ t= 3.1	$\beta = 0.35$ t= 2.3
					0.003	0.02

**Table 6: Results of multiple regression analysis for male participants (step-wise)**

(a) Dependent variable	Independent variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	B		
				Statistic	Verbal communications	Auditory communications	Feedback communications
Organizational efficiency	Verbal communication	0.24	0.05	0.7	$\beta = 0.11$ t= 0.7	$\beta = 0.15$ t= 0.9	$\beta = 0.17$ t=0.1
	Auditory communication				0.4	0.3	0.3
	Feedback communications						

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According to table 5, the coefficient for multiple correlation of the subscales of communication skills with efficiency among female participants have been determined as 0.28 and the coefficient of determination as 0.08. In addition,  $F=4.5$  and the equation is significant at the level of 0.03. As can be seen from the findings, the sub-scales of verbal and auditory communication are the best for the prediction of efficiency among female participants. Verbal communication shows the highest simple correlation with organizational efficiency and auditory communication shows the highest partial correlation with it.

According to table, the coefficient for multiple correlation of the subscales of communication skills with efficiency among male participants have been determined as 0.24 and the coefficient of determination as 0.05. In addition,  $F= 0.7$  and  $Sig= 0.6$ . Therefore, the regression equation is not significant.

### **Discussion**

Managers spend about two-third of their communication time on sending messages in a vertical basis to their bosses or employees (Oroofzadeh, 2008). Whenever communication is important for the managers, it causes commitment on behalf of them; therefore, it seems that being equipped with a minimum of communication skills and personal interactions are considered among the major indices for management. Sport is considered a kind of social phenomenon and communication plays an important life in it, too. Since communicative abilities are the most important factor influential on organizational decision making and the success of individuals, being equipped with communication skills and personal interactions are of great importance for managers. That is because more than 25 percent of the problems related to people's interaction within organizations originate from communication breakdowns at individual and organizational levels. It should be emphasized that whenever employees do not manage to communicate in an appropriate way, time and resources are wasted, objectives are not met, and their interaction with other faces serious damages. Therefore, a skillful manager should focus on methods to improve his/her communication in order to attain a better status among employees, minimize incompatibilities, and influence opinions and behaviors in order to be able to control reciprocal reactions.

### **Conclusion**

The findings in the current study show that there is a significant relationship between communication skills (and its sub-scales) and the efficiency of female and male participants since the ability to communicate is required in times of rapid changes in the environment. Managers should establish appropriate communication with employees both verbally and in practice in order to create efficiency. Furthermore, such an appropriate communication leads to guidance, planning, and organization and whenever employees are satisfied with their jobs and do their best, it has significant impacts on their physical and mental well-being and this in itself leads to organizational efficiency and better performance. The findings in the current study are in line with the findings in the studies done by MatinZarei and Yousefzadeh (2010) and Gencoz *et al.*, (2011). Perhaps the reason for such a similarity in findings can be attributed to the point that managers who establish better interactions with their bosses and employees can have a better understanding of their own employees and colleagues' feelings and make others trust them. In addition, they speak more clearly, listen to other's opinions carefully, accept criticism, analyze them carefully, and attempt to remove problematic areas, and get their message across sincerely.

The findings in the current study reveal that the subscales of communication skills can predict the efficiency of female and male participants. The findings are in line with that of Zamoudeh *et al.*, (2011). They found that such variables as verbal abilities, effective listening, open feedback, dressing, and respect are influential on customers' satisfaction and can be considered as the major variables in the prediction of customer satisfaction. Another finding in the current study is that the best predictors for organizational efficiency among female and male participants are verbal and auditory sub-scales. In addition, it was found that managers have an inappropriate level of communication skills and this is in line with those of Graham (1998), Nazari *et al.*, (2011) and Yukl (2008). Considering the importance and effectiveness of these two dimensions on the efficiency of managers and specialists, it is suggested that more attention should be given to verbal and auditory communications and their operationalization within the organization. In general, the findings of the current study and those of other studies performed on the

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same subject point that communication skills and their dimensions are influential on the efficiency of organizations. Therefore, in order to improve the efficiency of physical education and health department in the office of education, it is suggested to the managers and specialists to plan more coherently in order to increase verbal, auditory, and feedback communications and schedule some workshops or courses related to communication skills to increase physical education specialists' organization capabilities, decision making, and job satisfaction.

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